

LEGISLATIVE SUMMARY FOR:

February 17, 1998

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LAST WEEK:

SECRETARY TESTIFIES ON FY99 APPROPRIATIONS - Secretary Dan Glickman, appeared before both the House and Senate agriculture appropriations subcommittees last week. On Tuesday, the Secretary testified before the Agriculture, Rural Development and Related Agencies Subcommittee (Chairman Thad Cochran, R-MS) of the Senate Appropriations Committee. On Thursday, he appeared before the Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration and Related Agencies Subcommittee (Chairman Joe Skeen, R-NM) of the House Appropriations Committee. The Secretary presented the President's budget request for USDA of \$54.3 billion, about \$700 million less than FY98. This continues the downward trend in USDA budget requests, which are 14% below 1993 levels. Mandatory programs account for about \$39 billion of the request. The request includes full funding for the Women, Infants and Children (WIC) program, and an additional \$101 million for the National Food Safety Initiative. The conservation section of the budget includes a \$100 million dollar increase in EQIP and calls for the collection of \$10 million in user fees.

ESA REAUTHORIZATION HEARING POSTPONED - The House Resources Committee (Chairman Young, R-AK) postponed the hearing original scheduled for Wednesday on the reauthorization of the Endangered Species Act. It will be rescheduled for a later date.

LEGISLATION OF NOTE-

The following bills of significance to NRCS and conservation were recently introduced:

Bill	Member	Purpose
H.R. 3232	Miller (D-CA)	Would extend and revise provisions of the Clean Water Act dealing with concentrated livestock feeding operations.

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THIS WEEK:

PRESIDENTS' DAY CONGRESSIONAL RECESS - Members of Congress will be in their home districts for the Monday holiday and the remainder of the week.

ABANDONED MINE LAND RECLAMATION BRIEFING - Members of the National Coalition for Abandoned Mine Reclamation, representatives of NRCS and the Department of the Interior's Office of Surface Mining (OSM) will discuss programmatic efforts underway which address the potential problems arising from past coal mining practices.

Feb. 19 2:00 p.m. HC-4 Capitol

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LOOKING AHEAD:

CLEAN WATER ACTION PLAN BRIEFINGS - As a part of the President's rollout of the Clean Water Action Plan in Baltimore on February 19, the following Congressional briefings have been scheduled:

SENATE

Feb. 25 9:30 a.m. 406 Dirksen

HOUSE

Feb. 27 2:00 p.m. 2167 Rayburn

SENATE FY99 APPROPRIATIONS - The Agriculture, Rural Development and Related Agencies Subcommittee (Chairman Thad Cochran, R-MS) of the Senate Appropriations Committee will hold hearings on appropriations for FY99.

Feb. 26 10:00 a.m. 138 Dirksen Bldg.
Under Secretary for NRE, James R. Lyons and
NRCS Acting Chief, Thomas A. Weber

HOUSE FY99 APPROPRIATIONS - The Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration and Related Agencies Subcommittee (Chairman Joe Skeen, R-NM) of the House Appropriations Committee will hold hearings on appropriations for FY99.

March 17 1:00 p.m. 2362-A Rayburn Bldg.
Under Secretary for NRE, James R. Lyons and
NRCS Chief, Pearlie S. Reed

EQIP HEARING - The House Agriculture Subcommittee on Forestry, Resource Conservation, and Research (Chairman Larry Combest R-TX) has scheduled an oversight hearing on the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP).

March 5 9:30 a.m. 1300 Longworth

HEARING ON GLOBAL WARMING TREATY - The Senate Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry Committee (Chairman Richard Lugar, R-IN) has scheduled a hearing on the Kyoto Global Warming Pact that would require a reduction in emissions of carbon dioxide and other "greenhouse" gases that are believed to cause global warming.

March 5 9:00 a.m. 328-A Russell Bldg.

HOUSE SCHEDULES INTERIOR FY99 APPROPRIATIONS HEARINGS -

The Interior Subcommittee (Chairman Regula, R-Ohio) of the House Appropriations Committee will hold hearings on FY99 appropriations for programs under its jurisdiction. Hearings of potential interest to NRCS include:

March 5	Public witnesses for natural resources programs
March 10	Bruce Babbitt, Secretary of the Interior
March 19	Dan Glickman, Secretary of Agriculture
April 1	Members of Congress

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